

**Written Statement of
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**Hearing on
Impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill on Small Businesses
Before the
Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate
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Good morning Madam Chair, Ranking Member Snowe, and members of the Committee, I am Dr. Paul Anastas, Assistant Administrator in the Office of Research and Development at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about EPA's role in evaluating small business innovation for Gulf Coast oil cleanup submissions. As all of you know, the ongoing release and spreading of oil in the Gulf of Mexico is a continuing tragedy. EPA, in coordination with our federal, state, and local partners, is committed to protecting Gulf Coast communities from the adverse environmental effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. As part of this commitment, EPA, along with other federal agencies, is reviewing technology proposals from the public, including small businesses, for use in the oil spill cleanup.

Each year, billions of gallons of petroleum and other oils are transported and stored throughout the country, creating a significant potential for oil spills and serious threats to human health and the environment. EPA then either manages the oil spill response or oversees the response efforts of private parties at approximately 300 spills per year. After an oil spill occurs, EPA frequently provides technical assistance which may include air and water monitoring support, mobilizing our On-Scene Coordinators (OSCs) and EPA's Special Teams including the Environmental Response Team and the National Decontamination Team to assist with the response.

The Special Teams are comprised of highly-skilled environmental experts and utilize modern, sophisticated, and innovative technologies for oil spill response.

EPA shares the responsibility of responding to oil spills with the U.S. Coast Guard, (USCG). EPA leads inland responses and USCG leads coastal responses. Further, we share the responsibility for prevention and preparedness with USCG and several other federal agencies. The National Contingency Plan (NCP) is the federal government's blueprint for responding to both oil spills and hazardous substance releases and provides the federal government with a framework for notification, communication, and delegation of duties with respect to oil spill response. The NCP established the National Response Team (NRT), comprised of fifteen federal agencies, to assist responders by formulating policies and providing information, technical advice, and access to resources and equipment for preparedness and response to oil spills and hazardous substance releases. EPA serves as chair of the NRT and the USCG serves as vice-chair. However, the USCG is the incident-specific Chair for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response.

In addition to the NRT, EPA, along with representatives from other federal agencies and the states, form Regional Response Teams (RRTs) which are co-chaired by each EPA Region and its USCG counterpart. The RRTs assist the OSCs in their spill response decision making, and can help identify and mobilize specialized resources, including innovative cleanup technology solutions.

EPA is responsible for maintaining the NCP Product Schedule, which lists chemical and biological products available for federal OSCs to use in spill response and cleanup efforts based upon data submitted by the manufacturer of the product concerning, among other data points, the composition, effectiveness, and toxicity of the proposed product. Due to the unique nature of each spill and the potential range of impacts to natural resources, OSCs are consulted to determine which products, if any, should be used in a particular spill response. If the application of a product is pre-authorized by the RRT, then the OSC may decide to use the product in a particular response. If the

product application does not have pre-authorization from the RRT, then the OSC must consult with the RRT regarding its use.

We recognize the creativity, passion and ingenuity of the public as a resource for ideas that should be tapped. Within two weeks of the explosion, EPA set up a website to enable the public to submit ideas for technology solutions to aid the cleanup effort and enable EPA to review these in an orderly and expeditious manner. EPA has welcomed innovative and environmentally safe technology solutions related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill through its website at <http://www.epa.gov/bpspill/techsolution.html>. Since the events following the April 20, 2010 explosion and spill, EPA has received over 2000 submissions that represent many different technology categories including surface water containment and cleanup, air monitoring and detection, landfall cleanup, and wildlife protection and cleanup. These ideas have come from students, homemakers, scientists, small and large business owners as well as international corporations. People clearly want to contribute to the response effort.

EPA's review process includes identifying each submission into the appropriate technology category, a review by EPA technical experts, and then transmission to USCG staff stationed at the Unified Command site in Houma, LA for their consideration and possible testing or deployment. Suggestions related to the wellhead are forwarded directly to the Deepwater Horizon Unified Command BP for consideration. EPA's process is similar to that followed by other federal agencies. Since the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded, EPA and other federal agencies have received tens of thousands of suggestions and potential technology solutions from vendors and other members of the public both in the United States and abroad. Due to the level of response, and in the interest of more efficient use of federal resources, USCG's Research and Development Center (RDC) established the Interagency Alternative Technology Assessment Program (IATAP) on June 4, 2010 to ensure a fair, systematic, responsive, and accountable review of alternative response technologies by an

interagency team of experts. With the endorsement of the Federal On-Scene Coordinator (USCG), IATAP joins the EPA, USCG RDC, Minerals Management Services (MMS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Maritime Administration (MARAD), and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) in a unified service to execute the mission. EPA is currently working with other IATAP partner agencies to channel submissions into a single system to allow us to obtain the basic technical and scientific information we need to ensure a timely review of the submission and, if a technology is involved, facilitate our ability to test or deploy it in the most expeditious manner.

The USCG RDC has issued a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) for the purpose of organizing the collection and enhancing the Deepwater Horizon Response Team assessment of technology assistance offers. White Papers can be submitted by anyone or any entity – public or private – into any one of five technology gap areas. Additional information about the process is available at the above-mentioned website address. In addition, in an effort to continue the discussion on technology solutions with our external partners, on June 5, 2010, EPA hosted the Alternative Coastal Protection and Cleanup Technology Forum in New Orleans. The discussion centered on prevention and containment, short-term approaches and bioremediation measures for oil contaminated marshes. Attendees included representatives from state, local and federal government, as well as local businesses.

Please be assured that EPA will continue to work with universities, businesses, and individuals to evaluate and promote innovative technology solutions to assist in the monitoring, identifying, and responding to potential public health and environmental concerns. EPA, in partnership with other federal, state, and local agencies, as well as other community stakeholders, will continue to devote the necessary efforts to assist in the oil spill response. At this time I welcome any questions you may have.